

Regional Homelessness: Temporary Housing Solutions Category

The purpose of this document is to offer a range of actions communities can consider as they participate in the regional response to homelessness. Additional refinement to these tactics will include measurable outcomes and the identification of possible funding sources and partners as the action plan is developed, refined with stakeholder input, and offered for action in the fall of 2021.

The document includes both strategies and draft tactics for consideration. The strategies were adopted by the MAG Regional Council on May 26, 2021, with additional support from the MAG Management Committee, the MAG Human Services Community Initiatives Committee, and the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care Board. Local providers and key stakeholders participated in weekly strategy sessions to propose the following draft “tactics” (next steps) as options for implementing each strategy. These tactics will be reviewed at the June 10 Capstone Event and further refined with continued, collaborative stakeholder input.

As the draft tactics are reviewed, please consider the following questions:

- Which of these tactics are underway now?
- Which resonate the most with you?
- How might you help move these tactics forward?
- What are we missing?

Lead agencies are noted as applicable for each strategy when the work is already underway. If the work is not yet underway, lead agencies will be identified as part of the process to develop the action plan.

Strategy/Lead	Potential Tactics
Strengthen the Regional Response to Unsheltered Homelessness and the Regional System of Local Shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using data demonstrating need across subpopulations (chronically homeless, seniors, families, youth, etc.), coordinate with regional stakeholders to contribute funding, resources, and physical sites distributed across the region to achieve the regional goal of new shelter options.• Leverage a diverse array of shelter options, including a network of small capacity low-barrier shelters that are integrated with in the community.

DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION AND FEEDBACK

- Provide **community and stakeholder education** to deepen understanding of the benefits of low-barrier shelters to addressing regional homelessness.
- Establish **regional shelter protocols** to expand access to housing-focused supports such as case management, housing navigation, and behavioral health services.
- Strengthen pace of people exiting shelters to **permanent supportive housing** to increase emergency shelter availability. Consider steps to:
 - Allow longer term stays so people are not cycling between shelters or the streets while awaiting housing placement.
 - Revise policies that create barriers to transitions from shelter to permanent housing (such as waiving fees associated with transition, income requirements, and changing requirements regarding documentation, criminal history, pets, rental history and sobriety).
 - Work with people experiencing homelessness and others to identify barriers to increasing shelter utilization and efficiency in supporting clients to exit to permanent housing as quickly as possible.
- Enhance **training for shelter staff**, including mental health and substance use disorder training, trauma informed care, strengths-based approaches, and housing-focused case management.
- Address **barriers to staff retention**, including training, preventing secondary trauma, and evaluating compensation.
- Establish a **quarterly review of disaggregated data** to understand regional inequities in the shelter system for people of color and other populations experiencing homelessness and address systemic barriers that result in disparities.
- Establish **jurisdictional interdepartmental teams** to overcome silos across city services (e.g., human services, police, fire, libraries, parks, economic opportunities), with a process to coordinate regionally.
- Coordinate development of the **geographically dispersed shelters** with other priority strategies, including bridge housing, housing flexible funding, CES evaluation and enhancement, multisector partnerships, homelessness diversion, landlord engagement, and employment assistance strategies.

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Increase Bridge Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply COVID-19 resources to expand housing options for households who are enrolled in rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing programs but do not yet have a housing unit available and would otherwise be living on the streets.• Establish program protocols that support engagement of the region's most vulnerable households, including those who have experienced homelessness for a long time and are otherwise difficult to engage, and families who would benefit from an alternative to congregate environments.• Enhance regional emergency shelter protocols, including to potentially increase time limits in shelter and housing focused orientations, to ensure that both shelter and bridge housing systems are helping households attain housing and exit homelessness and not duplicating resources (such as moving households from emergency shelter to bridge housing).• Pair bridge housing accommodations with housing-focused supportive services that include case management, housing navigation, and other assistance to expedite a transition into permanent housing.• Increase supply of non-congregate bridge settings, including hotel/motel rooms, master leased units or shared single-family homes, and other scattered-site options, which can support residents' independence and enable greater community support.• Work with partners across systems, including health care, to fund specialized bridge housing for seniors and emergency system high utilizers who would benefit from more in-depth supportive services in order to transition to permanent solutions.• Coordinate development of the bridge housing with other priority strategies, including geographically dispersed shelters, housing flexible funding, coordinated entry system evaluation and enhancement, multi-sector partnerships, diversion work, landlord engagement, and employment assistance strategies.